Service New Brunswick
Business Plan

1999-2003

November 1999

Service New Brunswick
Services Nouveau-Brunswick

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1. INTRODUCTION

The New Brunswick Government has given Service New Brunswick an exciting mandate. The challenge is to modernize how government delivers services and information and to position the province as a leader in the innovative use of processes, laws and technology in order to serve people and organizations. This course will take SNB on a journey that will revolutionize the delivery of government services.

SNB's Mission

- Making government services more accessible
- Being stewards for authoritative information

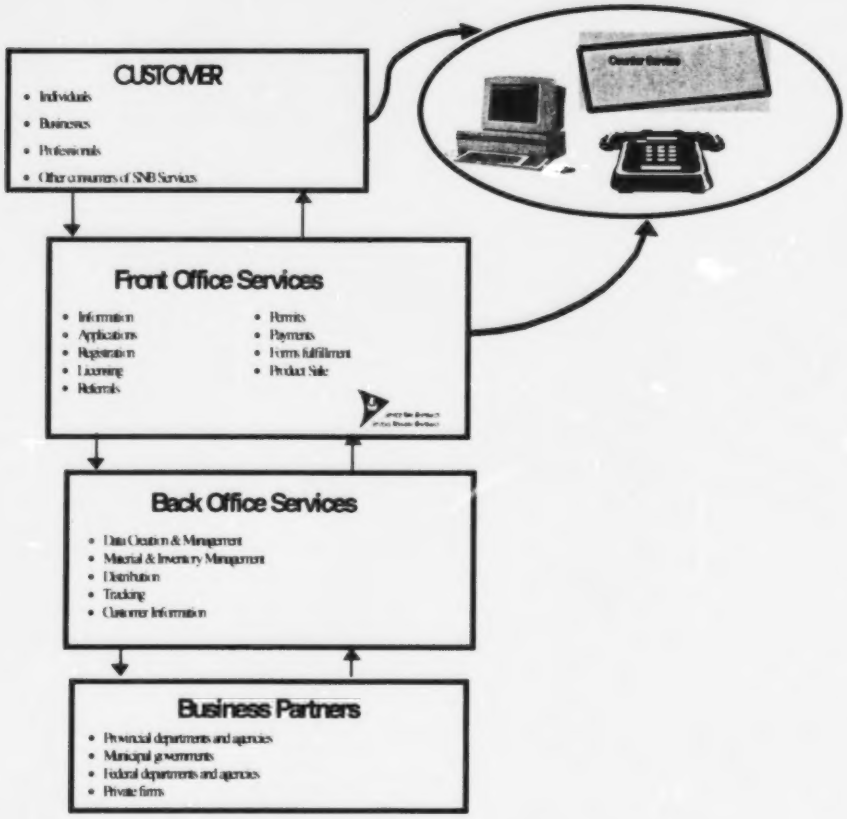
SNB has always been an organization in evolution. Its genesis was the New Brunswick Geographic Information Corporation, formed to bring together government organizations involved with assessment, registry and mapping. The Province expanded this mandate in 1996 to include delivering government services dealing with other registries, licenses, permits and revenue collection.

SNB's Guiding Principles

- Provide high quality products and services
- Offer maximum convenience to consumers
- Modernize products and services through continuous process improvement
- Provide a continuous learning environment for employees
- Provide value to business partners
- Meet the government's requirements for quality mapping and assessment products
- Contract the development and delivery of products and services to the private sector.

Now SNB functions with a well-developed business model. As services from business partners are assigned to SNB, they are incorporated into SNB's suite of services and re-engineered wherever possible to make them more efficient or more accessible to customers.

SNB's Business Model



By focusing on providing information, maintaining registries, database management, and developing efficient service delivery, SNB is an outsourcing solution that allows departmental business partners to focus on what they do well: developing policy and legislation, counseling, educating, training, enforcing and regulating.

This is the third business plan of Service New Brunswick and its predecessor, the New Brunswick Geographic Information Corporation. It is the first business plan to incorporate the activities and future plans of the expanded corporation.

Service New Brunswick is well advanced in implementing many innovative programs and has made significant technology investments aligned with the corporate vision. However, there is still a lot of work left to do.

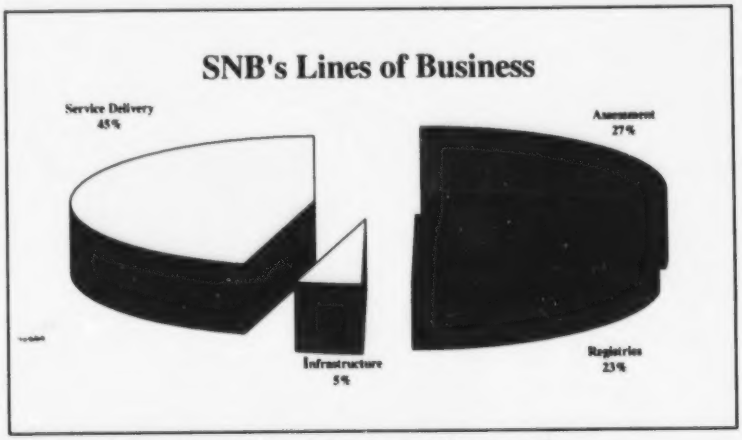
The business plan sets out the key priorities, strategies and financial plan for the next four years, as Service New Brunswick moves to improve the efficiency of government service delivery and increase access for customers.

2. SITUATION ANALYSIS

SNB has annual operating revenues of $39.7 million from four lines of business:

- **Assessment**, which provides the Province and municipalities with property assessments and issues assessment notices to property owners.

- **Registries,** which include real and personal property and the infrastructure for recording and storing information about real property boundaries, ownership, mortgages and related financial instruments.



- **Government Service Delivery,** which provides both over-the-counter and electronic contact for consumers who need access to government information and transaction services.

- **Government Information Infrastructure,** which maintains a network of survey control and base mapping data for the province and set common standards for geo-referenced information.

Assessment

Assessment provides property valuations for taxation purposes for all of the municipalities and the Province. The total assessed value of properties in New Brunswick exceeds $27 billion.

Critical Success Factors - Assessment

- Providing reliable and accurate quality commercial and industrial assessments
- Acquiring tools for efficient and effective use of available information and databases
- Maintaining SNB's effective working relationship with municipalities

Revenues in assessment, which are directly related to the total tax base, have not kept pace with the cost of providing the service.

Keys to increasing the productivity in this line of business are good commercial assessments, the investment in more automation and analytical tools for assessors, and improved access to information that can be used to better predict property values.

Registries

A registry is an institution that records and maintains authoritative information. One of the Corporation's priorities is to modernize the Province's system for real property (land) registration. Land registry customers include individuals, lawyers and land surveyors. As part of SNB's mission to improve service delivery, the Corporation is moving toward a system of electronic registries, which will eventually eliminate the need for registry offices to store and provide access to paper-based documents. This will build upon the success of the PPRS, which was the first paperless Personal Property Registry in the world. SNB's vision is to build a comprehensive, integrated, online source for land registration, assessment and mapping information. This will allow customers to conduct land-based transactions quickly, efficiently and with accurate information.

Critical Success Factors - Registries

- Providing information quickly
- Ensuring the accuracy and reliability of information

Government Service Delivery

The Corporation provides service delivery for various business partners such as the Department of Finance (accepting payment of property taxes), and the Department of Transportation (renewing driver's licenses and motor vehicle licenses).

Critical Success Factors - Government Service Delivery

- Driving down transactional costs
- Meeting consistently high customer service standards
- Offering choice and convenience
- Increasing the number of transactions

SNB's approach is based on two foundations. The first is to offer solutions to our business partners (other government departments and agencies) that will help them free up time for important legislation and policy decisions while giving to SNB the responsibility of collecting their fees and payments. The second is to maximize on the benefits of improved access for our customers (the general public) and hence provide more choices in service delivery at lower costs.

SNB currently offers three channels of delivery for government services:

1. *SNB Service Centres (Personal contact)*
   - Over-The-Counter (OTC) services at SNB offices
   - Clerk-assisted access to the other SNB channels

2. *SNB TeleServices (Telephone contact)*
   - Call Centre services with live agents
   - Interactive Voice Response (IVR) services
   - Telephone CallMall services

3. *SNB On-line (Electronic contact)*
   - Internet applications
   - Real property registry (PLANET)
   - Personal property registry (PPRS)

In order to make government service delivery more effective, SNB needs to concentrate efforts on developing a full range of E-commerce services. The use of customer credit cards, automated inventory management and the issuing of invoices electronically will all greatly improve the quality of our delivery.

This improved quality will encourage a significant growth in the use of our electronic service delivery methods; thereby creating opportunities for unit cost reduction through process re-design and re-engineering.

Government Information Infrastructure

Government Information Infrastructure provides a central service in the area of survey control and base mapping. This has given New Brunswick an excellent land information infrastructure which currently has world-wide recognition. It provides a service which is vital to many government departments who need land information, such as Natural Resources and Energy, Transportation, and Environment.

This is a line of business for which SNB receives a block-funded grant each year from government. The business plan assumes the government's long-term program to develop and maintain the land information according to priorities set in consultation with other departments will continue.

Critical Success Factors - Government Information Infrastructure

- Maintaining high standards for authoritative base data
- Involving business partners in identifying and prioritizing their needs

3. THE BASIS FOR SNB'S BUSINESS APPROACH

3.1 CUSTOMER SERVICE

Customers determine how SNB does business. Recent research on government services[1] indicates that five things determine customer satisfaction:

- being dealt with in a timely fashion
- being treated fairly
- acquiring services from competent staff
- being treated courteously
- getting what they came for

SNB continuously trains staff to ensure they are knowledgeable about products and services. As well, customer needs are monitored regularly and used to design new services and new ways of delivering services to meet those needs.

3.2 VALUE TO BUSINESS PARTNERS

SNB offers business partners efficient front and back office delivery systems for service information. SNB has a commitment to shared goals and adding value in the following areas:

- As a low-cost provider of transactional services, SNB offers business partners the capacity to focus on their core business without being required to deal with the customer interface.

- The three channels of service distribution offer many more convenient ways to reach customers, through multiple points of contact, electronic access and longer hours of operation.

- Cash reconciliation and reporting can integrate with other government systems.

- Access to data is available for detailed reports on activity and customer profiling.

[1] Citizens First, Erin Research, 1998

3.3 Investment In Technology

By investing in technology, SNB continues to improve access to service and expanded choices for customers. Technology offers an opportunity to streamline work flows, and improve access to data. By making the investment once in Service New Brunswick, government avoids duplicating investment in similar technology in multiple locations.

3.4 Staff Development

Success depends directly on attracting and retaining competent, motivated employees. SNB believes in the importance of continuous learning and improvement. SNB's Corporate Human Resources Plan will mirror the direction of this business plan. It will see the investment of a significant amount of time, money and effort to ensure that staff receives every opportunity to maintain requisite skills, and to develop new skills that will be required for our future growth.

3.5 Financial Self-Sufficiency

The Corporation operates like a business. Investment decisions are made on a business case basis, and the different lines of business (assessment, registries, government service delivery and government information infrastructure) are expected to finance themselves with no long term subsidization of one line of business by another. In order to accomplish the goals set out in this business plan, the corporation must manage operational budgets carefully to achieve the development investments outlined in this plan.

3.6 Stewardship of Information

Service New Brunswick is responsible for the personal property registry information of the province, for its real property information, for the assessment base, for the property mapping base, the topographic mapping base, and for the survey control framework. Success in these areas means that SNB will take appropriate measures to ensure that the information is current and accurate, and that there is easy access to it.

3.7 INDUSTRY SUPPORT

SNB has a mandate to foster development of the private sector. Most development and production work done by the corporation has been contracted out. This provides the private sector with a base load to develop skills and build new products that can in turn be used to obtain business outside New Brunswick. Another role played by SNB in support of industry is to showcase products and services. In addition, from time to time, some firms request staff or endorsements from the Corporation in order to help them get out-of-province work. SNB is committed to supporting the private sector and contributing to the province's economic development.

4. STRATEGIC GOALS FOR THE BUSINESS PLAN

The 1999-2003 planning period will see the Corporation focusing on five key areas.

The five goals for 1999-2003

- Review commercial & industrial assessments
- Modernize the land registry
- Implement electronic commerce capability
- Expand product and service offerings
- Assume expanded responsibilities for registries

4.1 REVIEW COMMERCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL ASSESSMENTS

For the past few years, SNB has concentrated on developing and implementing provincial standards for residential and simple commercial properties. This has resulted in more equitable assessments and valuation methodologies.

There are 68 complex commercial and industrial properties such as pulp mills, food processing and power plants which need similar consistent provincial standards.

SNB can complete this review task in four years under current conditions. However, it is preferable to complete this task in as short a time frame as possible, in order to have a consistent tax base for these properties without short-term inequities. SNB will therefore be making a request for special funding to accelerate the initiatives and assess all complex properties within two years instead of four.

In addition to this major goal, SNB intends to maintain its performance benchmarks for rates of referrals and appeals and for the quality of assessed values.

4.2 MODERNIZE THE LAND REGISTRY

This business plan will take SNB well along the road to the completion of Provincial Land Network (PLANET). It will be a period of sustained investment and development for PLANET. As well, several legislative and regulatory reforms will facilitate a fundamental change from the current grantor-grantee registry system to a modern system of land titles. This will be followed by the implementation of a Land Gazette, which will make it easy to determine many different restrictions and interests on property, such as zoning, easements, environmental contamination and secured debts.

4.3 Implement Electronic Commerce Capability

Building the electronic portion of SNB's business is critical, and E-commerce is a key building block for delivering many applications quickly and efficiently. The absence of full E-commerce functionality is a constraint to SNB's proceeding with several potential applications. SNB will have the key components of electronic commerce infrastructure in place by the end of 2000-01.

4.4 Expand Product and Service Offerings

Currently the Corporation completes approximately 3.1 million transactions each year in delivering 120 products and services on behalf of business partners.

The Corporation plans to add 2 million new transactions during the term of this plan. The high volume areas SNB is targeting for expansion are municipal payment taking, provincial and municipal fine management and federal government transactions. Several municipalities have already approached SNB to collect payments. The document *Service Canada – 'Canada...At Your Service'*, identifies the desire to provide "one-stop access to more than 1000 Government of Canada programs and services". Service Canada has asked Service New Brunswick to partner with them in Federal Government service delivery to New Brunswickers.

4.5 Become Provincial Registrar

A key element in SNB's growth strategy is applying the functionality and expertise used for the land and personal property registries to other types of registries. SNB uses a model for the land registry which builds the foundation registry, and then facilitates access to and use of the registry for departmental objectives through computer links. This required extensive changes to the registry system. The result is an increased level of business partner and customer service. This model could be used to improve other registries such as vital statistics and motor vehicles.

5. OPERATIONAL OBJECTIVES

SNB's five goals have been translated into specific objectives for each line of business, and for general corporate objectives that cut across several different lines of business.

The following items show the objectives adopted by SNB for the planning period.

5.1 COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW OF COMMERCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL ASSESSMENTS

- Review assessments of all complex commercial and industrial properties by October 2001.
- Achieve current performance benchmarks for the quality of other property assessments.
- Achieve an "Average cost of assessment per property" which is in the lowest quartile of provinces in Canada.

5.2 MODERNIZE LAND REGISTRY

- Begin implementation of land titles around the province in spring, 2000. Complete implementation within a year.
- Develop a strategy for quick conversion of parcels into land titles by the fall of 2000. Prepare the legal framework by the fall of 2001.
- Complete conversion of 50% of the parcels within business plan period.
- Implement the Land Gazette by fall 2001.
- Implement electronic registration of documents by December 2001.
- Implement land security concept by fall 2002.
- Implement electronic submission of plans by June 2003.

5.3 IMPLEMENT ELECTRONIC COMMERCE CAPABILITY (E-COMMERCE)

- Implement initial E-commerce functionality, by March 2000.
- Implement MVR using web by June 2000.
- Implement application for auto dealers' registration of new vehicles by June 2000.
- Implement POPA using IVR by October 2000.
- Implement eight IVR and web applications within the business plan period.
- Provide functionality to permit electronic registration of documents, by December 2001. This will include a proposal for supporting legislative changes.

5.4 Expand Product and Service Offerings

- Assume responsibility for all transactions under Provincial Offences Procedures Act (POPA)

  Provincial tickets (60,000 transactions) by Sept. 2000
  Municipal tickets (100,000 transactions) by March 2002

- Provide Payment Taking Services to Municipalities

  City of Fredericton (100,000 transactions) by Oct. 2000
  Other Cities (500,000 transactions) by March 2002
  Other Municipalities (100,000 transactions) by March 2003

- Provide Payment Taking and Licensing to other Provincial departments

  300,000 additional transactions by March 2002
  350,000 additional transactions by March 2003

- Federal Partnering

  200,000 additional transactions by March 2002
  300,000 additional transactions by March 2003

See Appendix B for a forecast of new transactions by year.

5.5 Become Provincial Registrar

- Use the Internet to enable registration of new vehicles by dealers, and renewals of vehicles by owners, by June 2000.
- Provide initial georeferencing of all civic addresses using coordinates derived from property maps, by March 31, 2001.
- Make birth certificates available at the service centers, subject to agreement of the Department of Health and Community Services, by June 2001.
- Implement systems to support maintenance of georeferenced civic address database, and increased functionality to support departmental applications using this database, by March 31, 2003.
- Assist Department of Supply and Services in the development of infrastructure for the Provincial Enterprise Registry, and the Person Registry.

6. DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

The corporation has made significant investments in the map base of the province, and in the development of law, processes and software to modernize the way business is done in the Province. Investments in technology and in mapping have exceeded $21 million in the past 8 years.

There are four major development initiatives anticipated during the four years of this business plan – Provincial Land Network (PLANET), which will support the modernization of the land registry; Customer Service System (CSS), which will support the delivery of government services to the citizens of this province; Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP), which will provide a modern accounting and human resources system to the Corporation; and topographic mapping, which will provide the Province with foundation databases necessary to manage resources.

6.1 PROVINCIAL LAND NETWORK (PLANET)

Service New Brunswick has been steadily implementing PLANET, the major initiative to modernize the way real property records are handled in the province. The current system for providing security for land transactions is based on a grantor grantee system that has been in place for 200 years. A real property transaction under a grantor grantee system requires searching the historical records on a property through the various buyers and sellers of the property back many years. This system no longer serves the landowner well, and the Province has been preparing to move to land titles.

The following steps in this process have been completed:

- Computerized property maps and ownership information are available.
- Land titles system pilot in Albert county is operating.
- Ownership information (maps, lists of parcel-related documents, selected assessment information) are provided to customers using Internet technology.
- Legislative amendments have been passed to the existing land titles legislation to enable using the property identifier as a proxy for a property description, and to shift the onus for responsibility for the correctness of documents submitted from staff to the lawyers submitting the work.
- An agreement was signed with the New Brunswick Law Society to cover the specifics of liability and standards for conversion of property to the land titles system, and for subsequent transactions.

During the business plan period, SNB will undertake new initiatives, including:

- Implementing amended land titles starting in one county in early summer, 2000 and moving across the province in a 9-12 month time frame.
- Proposing legislation and systems to support a Land Gazette, which is an electronically published source of all land related information, not just ownership.
- Proposing legislation and systems to support land security, which is a simplified way of providing notice of a financial interest in real property.
- Providing for electronic registration of documents so that transactions can be completed from clients' place of business.
- Speeding the conversion of parcels into the new system so that within ten years there will be no need to use the existing registry vaults for researching real property documents.

6.2 Customer Service System (CSS)

CSS is Service New Brunswick's development to provide easy, convenient access to government services through a variety of channels and to lower the cost of service delivery.

Past investments have led to implementation of several key components of the delivery strategy:

- Broadening the role of Revenue Offices beyond taking property tax payments, driver's licenses, and motor vehicle registrations.
- Training staff to provide the full range of services, so consumers have a single window for service delivery.
- Adding new technology to agents' workstations to make it easier to provide services.
- Extending hours of operation.
- Opening a call center so customers can use the telephone to order forms, make inquiries, and to conduct some transactions, such as renewing motor vehicle registrations.
- Investing in interactive voice response (IVR) systems, to allow the completion of transactions such as motor vehicle renewals or payment of fines automatically over the telephone.
- Making forms available to our agents through computer, rather than from hard copy inventory.

SNB's continuing program for service delivery improvement requires new investment in the following areas:

- Acquiring a robust electronic commerce infrastructure to allow customers to access more services using telephone or computer.
- Acquiring technology to provide the ability to accept fines and payments efficiently over all delivery platforms, with good cash management and reporting for client departments and agencies.
- Acquiring technology to provide comprehensive, flexible licensing services for various departments.
- Building new electronic delivery applications to provide service choice for customers.
- Improving the call centre and Corporation network technology to support increases in volume and complexity of services. Route calls and transactions to specialized agents throughout our physical network outlets, for workload balancing, including service and product fulfillment functions.

6.3 Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP)

The Enterprise Resource Planning system will provide functionality for accounting and human resource management in the Corporation. More importantly, it will also provide the foundation for necessary E-commerce applications.

The existing systems are a collection of old software inherited from the various agencies that were merged to form SNB. This collection has become obsolete and inadequate for the size and mandate of the Corporation. New ERP software has been purchased, and plans are to go live in 1999-2000 with some portions of the software and to implement subsequent portions over an 18-month time frame.

6.4 Topographic Mapping

For 30 years New Brunswick has enjoyed the benefits of a corporate, centralized approach to construction of its land and water information database. As a result, other government departments do not have to create basic maps. They overlay their specialized information on a base that is common to all departments. This saves money, and permits sharing of data between departments, as well as updating with current data from departments.

The investments reflect the ongoing commitment of government to continue building, maintaining and enhancing the base mapping program.

The priorities for the coming years are a computerized province-wide orthophotography base, and geo-referencing of civic addresses. The orthophoto base will be used to update existing databases such as the enhanced topographic mapping database, E911 road inventory, and NB Power utility easements. It is also essential for the creation of several planned databases such as a provincial land cover/land use database, geo-referenced civic address database and the enhanced hydrographic database. Among other applications, the civic address base will make it easy for emergency vehicles to find the location of emergencies and enable better linkages to other databases to let them know what to expect when they get there.

6.5 SUMMARY

The Corporation will spend over $23.1 million over the next four years to improve its technology to carry out services outlined in this business plan. Retained earnings from operations will support this cost, over the long term. However, SNB will need an investment of $1.3 million from the Province to accelerate the development of Customer Service System (CSS) and begin reaping the benefits of electronic service channels.

Proposed Capital Investments – 1999-2003
(Millions of Dollars)

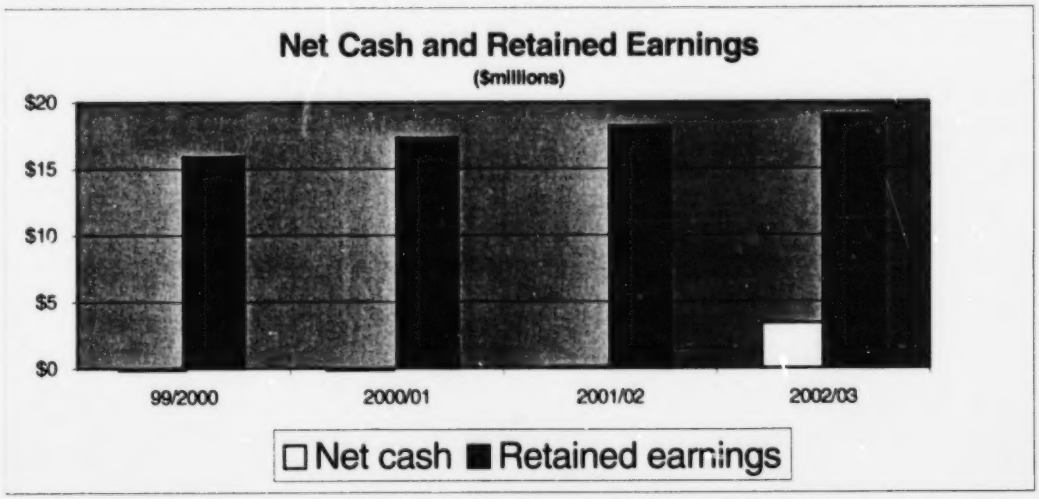
	1999-2000	2000-2001	2001-2002	2002-2003
PLANET	2.2	1.6	1.0	1.0
CSS	3.4	3.3	3.2	0.7
ERP	1.2	1.0	.3	----
Topographic Mapping	1.4	1.0	.9	.9
Total	8.2	6.9	5.4	2.6

7. FINANCIAL FORECAST AND OPERATING STATEMENTS

The financial plan reflects increased revenue and reduced transaction costs from the expansion of the Government Services line of business, and a statement of the cash flow and retained earnings. SNB will require an investment of $1.3 million from the Province in addition to cash flow from operations to permit the level of investment outlined in the previous section.

7.1 CASH AND RETAINED EARNINGS

SNB's cash and retained earnings position for each year in the plan appear below. If revenue or expense performance vary significantly from forecasts, the development investments will be adjusted to ensure that the cash position of the Corporation is not jeopardized.



In addition to operational objectives, each line of business has specific financial targets to achieve self-sufficiency. The following goals are necessary to fund the aggressive development program contained in this plan.

7.2 ASSESSMENT

The Corporation will present a plan to Government for funding to accelerate the review of complex industrial properties. The revaluations resulting from this review are expected to increase provincial and municipal tax revenues.

7.3 REGISTRIES

A new fee structure to support Land Titles and a fee change to Personal Property to more closely match other provinces' fees are planned. As well, SNB expects to sell at least two software licenses. These fees and sales will enable SNB to make the investments required to modernize and improve the real property registry

7.4 GOVERNMENT SERVICE DELIVERY

The plan forecasts a revenue increase of $3.5 million from new business activity and of $1.8 million for the operation of new service centers. The Corporation will reengineer its service delivery to achieve productivity improvement in its maturing over-the-counter services. It also expects to move half of its business to less costly electronic channels. As a result, cost reduction targets of $500,000 in 2000/2001 and $250,000 have been established in each of the subsequent years for an ongoing total of $1,000,000 by 2002/2003. Any new services taken on must provide sufficient revenues to recover related development and operating costs.

7.5 GOVERNMENT INFORMATION INFRASTRUCTURE

This line has a planned deficit of $500,000 in 1999/2000. This deficit results from a carry forward of work from the previous year and is funded from surplus retained in 1998/1999. It will be operated on a breakeven basis for the remainder of the planning period.

7.6 GENERAL

The financial forecast and operating statement in Appendix A show the expected operating results for each line of business. The forecasts reflect the goal of each line of business achieving or maintaining self-sufficiency. While it shows losses in some lines of business, these losses include the impact of amortizing the large investments in new technology projects. These investments will position each line of business to be self-sufficient in the next planning period.

APPENDIX "A"

FINANCIAL FORECASTS and OPERATING STATEMENTS- 1999-2003
(In Millions of Dollars)

	Assessment	Registries	Service Delivery	Infrastructure	Total
1999-2000					
Revenue	11.2	9.0	17.6	1.8	39.6
Expense	12.1	9.6	15.3	2.3	39.3
Net Income	(0.9)	(0.6)	2.3	(0.5)	0.3
2000-01					
Revenue	12.3	10.1	20.2	1.7	44.3
Expense	12.6	9.8	18.9	1.7	43.0
Net Income	(0.3)	0.3	1.3	(0.0)	1.3
2001-02					
Revenue	12.6	10.6	20.8	1.7	44.3
Expense	12.6	10.6	20.0	1.7	43.9
Net Income	0.0	0.0	0.8	0.0	0.8
2002-03					
Revenue	12.1	11.0	22.2	1.7	47.0
Expense	12.1	10.8	21.6	1.7	46.2
Net Income	0.0	0.2	0.6	0.0	0.8

NOTE:

1. All amounts are based on generally accepted accounting principles (GAAP) rather than a cash basis of accounting.
2. Minor discrepancies between totals and individual components are due to rounding.

APPENDIX "B"

FORECAST GROWTH IN TRANSACTIONS – Government Services
(cumulative by year)

Type of Transaction:	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03
Collection of POPA fines			
Provincial	60,000	60,000	60,000
Municipal	---	100,000	100,000
Other			
Other Services			
Municipal payment taking	350,000	600,000	700,000
Provincial departments	---	300,000	650,000
Federal Government		200,000	500,000
Annual Transactions Total	410,000	1,260,00	2,010,000